

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

March 1, 2016

Town Hall

Chairman Kenneth Picard; Selectman Robert J. Fleming; Selectman James Brochu; Town Manager, Blythe C. Robinson; Executive Assistant, Sandra Hakala

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm. Chairman Picard opened the meeting and after the pledge of allegiance reviewed the agenda.

MINUTES

Motion #1: Motion made by Selectman Brochu to approve the February 16, 2016 regular session meeting minutes.

Second: Selectman Fleming, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

INVITED GUESTS

Members of the Opioid task force; Police Chief Bradley, Amy Leone of Community Impact Incorporated in Milford, Al Holman of the Board of Health, and Mendon Upton Regional School District Superintendent Joseph Maruszczak, joined the Selectmen to discuss publicly what they can offer to the task force and provided suggestions for raising awareness.

A similar meeting was held earlier in the week to discuss ways to spread awareness about and offer help to individuals struggling with addiction and their family members.

Selectmen Picard led the initiative to create an opioid task force in hope to make resources and information available to the community. He revealed that part of his motive to create awareness is personal and that the task force can assist other people with addictions and their family by “having resources readily available,” and taking the condition “away from shame and blame and treat it as a condition that needs help.”

Chief Bradley said the police department has had an increase in training and resources recently to help combat the issue. The Chief said he is in the process of providing training to all officers so they’re aware of the resources that are available for people who are battling an addiction or people who have overdosed. All officers have been carrying Narcan for more than a year, which has been used in town and is working well.

The department also has a resource guide that compiles a wide variety of services for people struggling with addiction and their families and will use social media pages in hopes of creating more awareness.

The state Board of Health is now describing the opioid epidemic as a “crisis,” and according to Al Holman the Upton Board of Health will be involved.

Amy Leone stated she has been able to help many struggling individuals in the area through working with schools, police and communities. Drop-in centers that have a host of information and resources there as well as therapists are there to help anybody that is struggling with an addiction and wants to get help, or a family member.

43 Ms. Leone hopes to do more to regionalize “prevention as well as education of different
44 strategies to address this opioid issue or opioid misuse at a local level.”

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46 Several programs within the school district directed toward drug education and prevention are
47 ongoing said Joe Maruszczak, and he hopes to do more. “Good decision-making” is a key
48 concept at every level in the district, he said.

49
50 Chris Bullock – ClearGov

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52 There is an article on the STM warrant to purchase a subscription for the rest of this fiscal year to
53 utilize the ClearGov website. Mr. Bullock gave a presentation on how it works and the features
54 that enable visitors to the site to benchmark Upton’s financial information against those of
55 similar communities. ClearGov was launched in June of 2015 with the goal of helping average
56 citizens better understand how their tax dollars are spent and how their local government is
57 performing. Their vision is that through better understanding citizens will want to get more
58 involved in their local government and help drive positive change but local governments lack the
59 tools to efficiently communicate with their community. This website supports governments in
60 their effort to promote transparency and collaboration with citizens.

61 62 **MANAGER’S REPORT**

63 Ms. Robinson attended the Planning Board met on Tuesday night where the site plan for the
64 Kiwanis Beach parking lot was approved; the preliminary plans from Pulte for development of a
65 new subdivision to be called “Upton Ridge” on Hartford Avenue South at the Northbridge town
66 line proposing a 139-unit age restricted condominium development was received; and updates
67 were provided by the owner of the vacant house at 6 Main Street that they wish to demolish and
68 replace with a new four-family building. The Planning Board also discussed the Village Center
69 bylaw will review the language of the bylaw at an upcoming meeting.

70
71 The annual scholarship process has begun and information has been disseminated to the high
72 schools and posted to the website. Students will have until April 13th to submit an application to
73 the Board for consideration.

74
75 A Workforce Skills Capital Grant of \$407,517 which allows Blackstone Valley Tech to make
76 state-of-the-art upgrades to several programs without increasing the school’s local-taxpayer-
77 supported budget for fiscal year 2017 was announced by the Governor.

78 79 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

80 **Discuss FY 2016/2017 Budget – Police and Fire/EMS**

81 Chief Bradley and Chief Goodale were in attendance to discuss in detail the changes proposed in
82 the police department and the Fire/EMS budgets for next year.

83 84 **Motion to Appoint – Communications Officer**

85 Earlier this year a vacancy was established in the Police Department due to the resignation by
86 one a full-time dispatchers. A memo from the Chief recommending that Drew McNerny be
87 appointed to this position after participating in the search process was received. The Town
88 Manager concurs with the Chief’s recommendation.

Motion #2: Motion made by Selectman Fleming to appoint Drew McInerny to the position of Communications Officer to expire in May waiving the fifteen day waiting period.

Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

Review Motions for the March 3rd Special Town Meeting Warrant

The Selectmen reviewed the motions for Thursday's special town meeting noting one minor difference in the motions from the warrant; to reduce the request for the hotbox in article 5 from \$10,000 to \$7,775. The DPW has researched the units available through the State bid process and recommends a unit that costs \$32,775. The balance of the funds (\$25,000) is coming from a state grant.

Motion to Approve Department Head Contracts

The Board considered the successor contracts for the Police Chief, Fire/EMS Chief and Public Works Director. The contracts for the Chiefs are three years in length and up for renewal on July 1st. The DPW Director's contract is also up for renewal on that date, but in accordance with State law is one year in length. All contain a provision for a pay increase equal to 2.0% in line with what other employees are receiving. The Town Manager requested approval by the Board and the authority to execute them on the Town's behalf.

Motion #3: Motion made by Selectman Fleming authorizes the Town Manger to enter into a three year contract with the Fire Chief, Aaron Goodale.

Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

Motion #4: Motion made by Selectman Fleming authorizes the Town Manger to enter into a three year contract with the Police Chief, Michael Bradley, Jr.

Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

Motion #5: Motion made by Selectman Fleming authorizes the Town Manger to enter into a one year contract with the Director of Public Works, Vincent Roy.

Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

Discuss Intent to Sell – 47 Acres on East Street that is under MGL Chapter 61A

The Board discussed correspondence from Attorney Francis Di Luna on behalf of the Richard A. Amato Investment Trust giving notice to the Town of Upton of the Amato's intent to sell 47 acres of land on East Street that is currently taxed under Mass. G. L. c. 61A. The law requires that owners of property in this program give notice to the Town and the Town has a 120-day window of time to exercise its right of first refusal to purchase the land at the price proposed. The notice was received on February 17, 2016, thus the 120-day period will extend until mid-June.

The board reported that since their initial interest back in December, they have now decided to not proceed with the purchase or attempted acquisition of this land citing much of the land would likely not be usable because it is wet and definitely affected by conservation law; and it would be inconsiderate to ask citizens to pay for this at this time considering the recent override last year.

Bill Taylor, Chairman of the Open Space Committee who was in attendance, asked selectmen to defer their decision to refuse the land until he has a chance to examine the land for potential use. The Selectmen supported his request and will defer their response for thirty days.

Approve 5K Road Race – April 10, 2016

The Selectmen reviewed the request from the Mendon Upton Teacher's Association to hold a road race that will start and finish from Nipmuc High School on April 10th. The application has been approved by the public safety and public works departments, and the applicant has noted their plans to advertise the event clean up afterwards and meet all of our requirements. The Town Manager has also recommended approval of this event.

Motion #6: Motion made by Selectman Fleming to authorize the request from the Mendon Upton Teacher's Association to hold a road race that will start and finish from Nipmuc High School on April 10th.

Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

Review Street Sign Request

A request by the Conservation Commission to install turtle crossing signs on Fowler Street near the golf course was reviewed. The Commission will provide the signs which will alert drivers that spotted, wood and painted turtles cross the road at this location. The curvature of the road makes it difficult for drivers to react when needed.

Motion #7: Motion made by Selectman Fleming to authorize the request by the Conservation Commission to install turtle crossing signs on Fowler Street near the golf course.

Second: Selectman Brochu, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

MEETING LOOK AHEAD TOPICS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURN MEETING

Motion #8: At 7:49pm motion was made by Selectman Brochu to adjourn the regular meeting.

Second: Selectmen Fleming, Unanimous Chairman Picard.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Hakala
Executive Assistant